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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 003155

SIPDIS

STATE FOR T, AC, AC/CB, NP/CBM, VC/CCB, L/ACV, IO/S  
SECDEF FOR OSD/ISP  
JOINT STAFF FOR DD, PMA-1 FOR WTC  
COMMERCE FOR BIS (GOLDMAN)  
NSC FOR CHUPA  
WINPAC FOR LIEPMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/22/2013

TAGS: PARM PREL KNNP LY CWC

SUBJECT: CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC): OPCW READY TO ACT ON LIBYA'S AGREEMENT TO ABANDON CW

REF: STATE 345870 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Pete Ito, U.S. Delegation to the OPCW. Reasons: 1.5 (B, D)

This is CWC-137-03.

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: USDel briefed the OPCW Chief of Staff and Director for Verification December 22 on Libya's agreement to abandon its chemical weapons, and conveyed U.S. readiness to provide more detailed information in the near future. The OPCW officials welcomed the offer and congratulated the U.S. for the success at bringing Libya around. They said the Libyans had not yet contacted the OPCW but that the organization is "ready and willing" to help the GOL prepare for accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The first step would be a preparatory visit to Tripoli by members of various offices of the organization's Technical Secretariat to explain to the Libyans their obligations and work on their initial declaration of chemical weapons and facilities. They anticipated that the OPCW had adequate resources for this effort, but that it would be more taxing on personnel than on finances in the long run. END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) USDel met with OPCW Chief of Staff Rafael Grossi and Director for Verification Horst Reeps December 22 to brief them on Libya's agreement with the U.S. and UK to abandon its weapons of mass destruction and allow international verification of the process (REF). We conveyed the offer of an in-depth briefing by USG officials for the OPCW in the near future. Grossi thanked us for the information and welcomed the offer of a detailed briefing. On behalf of, and on instructions from, Director General Pfirter (who is away from The Hague), he congratulated the U.S. for the success of its "long, silent, persistent" efforts at bringing Libya around, and said that the OPCW would issue a press release the same day welcoming the agreement. He added (in confidence) that UK Foreign Minister Straw had attempted to contact the DG over the weekend on this matter, but had been unable to reach the DG for technical reasons.

¶3. (C) Asked how soon the OPCW would be prepared to respond to an invitation to visit or a request for assistance from the Libyan government, Reeps said the Libyans had not yet contacted the Organization, but that the OPCW was "ready and willing to play our part" in helping the GOL prepare for accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). He was ready "to sacrifice Christmas" if need be, but guessed that it would take at least several weeks before the stage was set for inspections. The first step, Reeps said, would be a preparatory visit to Tripoli by representatives of the Industry Verification Branch, Chemical Demilitarization Branch, Policy Review Branch, Declarations Branch, and Legal Office to explain to the Libyans their obligations and assist in preparing their initial declaration. The Organization was preparing for a Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) along these lines in anticipation of an invitation from the GOL. He said the Technical Secretariat would take the lead, but welcomed a full briefing by the USG as part of that effort.

¶4. (C) Grossi said that while there was a "clear political linkage" with the IAEA's activities with Libya and Pfirter would be in touch with IAEA DG El-Baradei in the coming days, the two organizations' processes "cannot be compared." Libya, he pointed out, was in violation of the NPT, but was not a signatory to the CWC. The OPCW would be "starting from scratch" with a TAV to "explore what is there" and put the pieces in place for initial inspections. Asked if the OPCW could support inspections "if they were invited tomorrow," Reeps responded, "of course." But he and Grossi both re-iterated that conditions did not appear to be quite ready for that step -- which Reeps guessed might be one month away.

¶5. (C) In response to queries about how great a strain additional inspections and assistance activity would pose for the Organization, Reeps was relatively sanguine. In the short run, he said 8-10 officials could be mobilized for the

TAV. In the longer run, there would be a greater strain on personnel (mainly inspectors) than on financial resources. Ironically, he added, delays in the U.S. CW destruction program would free up some resources for Libya, though not sufficiently to prevent some strain. There would have to be some re-allocation of industry inspections, which had been planned through the first quarter of 2004. (Note: Reeps' comments are part of his now-familiar lament over what he regards as the adverse impact of DG Pfirter's method of implementing the tenure policy at the organization. He has consistently stated that reductions in his branch will degrade his ability to conduct inspections. End Note.)

**16.** (C) The meeting with concluded with further discussion of scheduling a briefing for selected OPCW officials by the U.S. Grossi reported that Deputy DG Hawtin would return to The Hague during the first week of January, and DG Pfirter about a week later. Reeps added that he would be there during this period, and "we are prepared."

**17.** (U) Ito sends.  
RUSSEL